



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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Michael O. Leavitt
Governor
Lowell P. Braxton
Division Director

August 19, 1998

Brad Exton, District Ranger
Ashley National Forest
Vernal Ranger District
355 North Vernal Avenue
Vernal, Utah 84078

Re: Initial Review of Plan of Operations, Deseret Generation and Transmission Company,
Diamond Mountain Limestone Mine, S/047/066, Uintah County, Utah

Dear Mr. Exton:

The Division has completed a cursory review of the Plan of Operations (POO) for Deseret Generation and Transmission's (DG&T) proposed Diamond Mountain Limestone Mine located in Uintah County, Utah, which was received August 12, 1998. The Division currently has exploration notice E/047/046 on file for DG&T's earlier bulk sample work at this site. The POO states the proposed operation will not disturb more than five acres of surface area at any one time, however, the life of mine disturbance is estimated as 80 acres over a 36 year period.

The information provided in the POO is insufficient for the Division to determine if this operation should be permitted under the Minerals Rules as a Small Mining Operation (five acres of surface disturbance or less) or as a Large Mining Operation (more than five acres of surface disturbance). Key information needed to make this determination include: (1) the inclusion of the 3/4 mile access road disturbance as part of the mine disturbance requiring reclamation; (2) a scaled map delineating the proposed surface facilities at the mine (pit, stockpiles, fuel storage, sediment ponds, maintenance area, truck loadout, etc.) with a disturbed area border delineating the disturbed acreage; and (3) a proposed schedule of mining and concurrent reclamation acreage with a drawing showing the sequence of mining and reclamation for a minimum period of five years and a maximum of ten years. According to the Minerals Rules, the Division requires reclaimed area vegetation to have survived up to three growing seasons before the reclaimed area can be considered as fully released. These reclaimed, but unreleased areas are still considered part of the mining disturbance.

According to the current MOU, it is understood that the Division would submit our review comments to your agency who would then forward the comments to the operator. Please forward the Division's request for information addressing the three items described above to DG&T.

From information contained in the POO, the proposed access road will create a disturbance of approximately 2.7 acres (3,960 feet long by 30 feet wide). If the access road disturbance is considered as part of the mining disturbance then the remaining mine disturbance would be limited to 2.3 acres or

Page 2
Brad Exton
Deseret Generation
M/047/066
August 19, 1998

less for this operation to remain within the Small Mining Operation category of the Minerals Rules. For this operation to remain within the Division's SMO category the surface disturbance (new road, mine site and areas reclaimed but not yet released) would need to be five acres or less.

If this operation falls within the Division's LMO category the POO would need to meet the permitting requirements of Minerals Rules large mine operation notice of intention. A large mine operation requires a 30-day public comment period after reaching a tentative approval level, and the posting of a reclamation surety. Under the current Memorandum Of Understanding between the Division and the USFS, the Division could recognize a surety posted with the Forest Service, provided the surety is not released without prior written consent from the Division. At the present time, the Minerals Program is operating with a backlog of large mine operation permitting reviews. If DG&T's proposed operation is categorized as an LMO, the Division would need additional information to satisfy the LMO requirements and an additional 30-60 days from submission of the additional information to complete an initial LMO review.

A copy of our LMO-NOI form and a copy of the Minerals Rules are enclosed. If the proposed operation is categorized as a LMO the information requirements described by the LMO-NOI form and section R647-4 of the Minerals Rules will need to be satisfied in order to receive Division approval.

The Division will suspend further review of the Diamond Mountain Limestone Mine NOI until a response addressing the three items described above is received from you or DG&T. If you have any questions in this regard please contact me at (801) 538-5267 or Wayne Hedberg, the Permit Supervisor of the Minerals Regulatory Program at (801) 538-5286. If you wish to arrange a meeting to discuss this review, please contact us at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony A. Gallegos", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anthony A. Gallegos
Senior Reclamation Specialist

jb
Enclosures: LMO-NOI form, Minerals Rules
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